

HOOPLE BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS of HOOPLE LTD held in the Jam Factory Room at Nelson building, Hereford, on Friday 6th October 2023 at 10.00am.

Board Members present:

Nicola Twigg (NT)	Chair and Non-Executive Director – Wye Valley Trust
Tracey Sampson (TS)	Non-Executive Director – Herefordshire Council
Hilary Hall (HH)	Non-Executive Director – Herefordshire Council
Andrew Mclean (AM)	Non-Executive Director – Lincolnshire County Council

Hoople Officers Supporting the Board:

Audrey Clements (AEC)	Chief Executive Officer
Stephen Weller (SW)	Head of Hoople Care
Mark Aldsworth (MA)	Head of Buildings Operations
Simon Mortimore (SM)	Head of IT
Daley Jones (DJ)	Head of Training & Education
Lisa Yates (LY)	Head of HR & OD
Kerry Lawrence (KL)	Company Secretary Support / Minute Taker

Invited:

David Warden (DW)	Associate Director of IM&T – Wye Valley NHS Trust
Jane Ives (JI)	Managing Director – Wye Valley NHS Trust

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies received from David Warden.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 No declarations of interest were received.

3. Minutes, Action Sheet and Matters Arising

- 3.1 The minutes of the board meeting held on 20th July 2023 were approved as an accurate recording of the meeting subject to an amendment that the Chair met with external auditors, as opposed to the board of directors.



Action log

2/J – action remains open and is a long standing piece of work to review KPI's.

4. Business Performance

- 4.1 AEC presented a new look report to highlight the current activities, key risks, concerns and performance.
- 4.2 AEC confirmed that the purchase of Legion Way building had been completed and is currently at the design phase. It was agreed that a report on the journey to purchasing the new building; the vision, plans and timelines and the opportunities/ partnerships it could bring will be brought to the next board meeting.

Action: AEC

- 4.3 AEC stated that a Facilities Manager had been recruited and will play a key role in the operation of the building in ensuring Legion Way will be ready for Hoople staff to move in, hopefully in January 2024.
- 4.4 The Chair acknowledged that the economic data suggests vacancies are falling dramatically and asked if Hoople were seeing any improvement. SW advised Hoople were not seeing any improvement in recruitment and currently felt more work is being done for the same output.
- 4.5 The board were interested to understand the reasons behind staff leaving Hoople Care. SW advised there was no obvious reasons and varies depending on the service but mainly staff remain in the care sector and have either moved to a higher level position or have moved out of county. All leavers are invited to attend an exit interview and the data is monitored for any trends to ascertain whether any changes to the services are required.
- 4.6 LY advised discussions have started on implementing a more targeted marketing approach in terms of recruitment for different sectors and those conversations are evolving, particularly in care to look how a career in care could be more attractive i.e transferable skills.
- 4.7 JI informed the board funding for Hillside and Homefirst has moved to better care funding in Herefordshire, delegated by the ICB to Herefordshire Partnership which will create some changes to governance and accountability. In response to a question, AEC advised that she works with the capital accounts to ensure invoices are raised for those outside of the ECF funding.
- 4.8 There were some concerns raised with the Learning Disability service. AEC stated she had asked the council finance team to scrutinise spending, in comparison to similar services the council provide to identify any non-appropriate spend.



- 4.9 In response to a question, SW advised the rating given by Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service for fire safety means they were satisfied with the measures in place and they are not expected to visit again for five years. However a loft compartment survey is required to be carried out and any actions necessary to prevent the spread of a potential fire to the loft.
- 4.10 In response to a question, SW confirmed the visit referred to in the report is Herefordshire Council's Quality Team visited the site to review food preparation.
- 4.11 The board noted the contents of the report, including the 2023/24 outturn position, the progress to date made by the business and key issues and risks.

5. The Purpose of Hoople

- 5.1 AEC presented a paper for discussion to redefine the purpose of Hoople and explained the rationale behind this was to inform and develop a five year strategy. AEC sought board's views on the proposed direction and content for the business plan.
- 5.2 JI felt as a strategic asset for public sector organisations, it's about how Hoople can leverage the most value for its shareholders and also as a provider, there is a responsibility on WVT to support and encourage mutual learning across the teams.
- 5.3 It was recognised quality is also important as well as expertise. There was a question whether there is opportunity for Hoople to become the centre of excellence as a long term vision.
- 5.4 There was a discussion on the growth of Hoople care and utilising Hoople's training resources, however it was felt important to ensure foundations are fully embedded and the service is in a stronger position to look at opportunities in the future.
- 5.5 AEC outlined the proposed principles and asked for board's views. A board member commented that the principles should be aligned to the purpose of Hoople once established. LY emphasised the importance of principles particularly to candidates looking to work for Hoople.
- 5.6 WVT board members were in support of the shareholder priorities particularly around social care and growing local employment opportunities. The Chair asked whether there is clear understanding of shareholders priorities to help shape Hoople's strategic objectives to define the company's purpose. TS added that the council are looking to include AEC into their transformation board to help influence discussions around defining the council's priorities and build the strategic partnership.

- 5.7 LY suggested some alignment of strategic priorities with our shareholders to identify any gaps in order to look at realigning and evolving Hoople's priorities to bring closer to those of our shareholders.
- 5.8 AM observed working with Hoople over the past 3 years, from a shareholder perspective it values the integrative and collaborative in approach Hoople takes, however moving forward acknowledged the financial challenges local authorities will be faced with and suggested ensuring services can be optimised as can be.
- 5.9 A draft strategy would be brought back to board with the budget to support the strategy, for final approval in March.

6. Study Programme

- 6.1 DJ shared a video of Hoople's study programme providing an overview of the service together with a presentation which included performance statistics.
- 6.2 The Chair queried in terms of destination of leaving, what is the next phase for further education. DJ explained that the funding cycle works on a yearly rotation, if a learner is not ready to leave, an agreement is made with the local authority to keep the learner for a second year providing there is a good reason.
- 6.3 The board were interested in the outcomes of the students and asked if there is any benchmarking data as a measurement of those outcomes. DJ advised there is a real difficulty getting relevant information around SEN students, however the ESFA and Ofsted provides scrutiny around destination tracking.
- 6.4 Acknowledging the growth of the programme, the Chair asked what scale of opportunity is there in Herefordshire. DJ advised the number of providers in Herefordshire have diminished or are not ESFA funded, so are unable to take on SEN students. DJ further advised that an increased numbers of students with additional needs are being seen and also a risk of students who have missed a significant period of school.
- 6.5 HH was interested to understand the five year strategic plan for each service area of the business and how it links into the shareholders vision to achieve the desired outcome through potential further investment. DJ advised that discussions have been held with the Post 16 Senior Advisor in the council to discuss further opportunities including an opportunity around supported internships.

- 6.6 In response to a question, DJ confirmed the ESFA funding is based on hours a learner is on programme and is the same for other learning providers. In terms of quality, Hoople were awarded a rating of 'good' by Ofsted, the next rating is 'Outstanding' there are no comparable providers in Herefordshire who have achieved 'Outstanding'.
- 6.7 A board member asked how much of the marketplace does Hoople have. DJ stated that there is a team in the council who deal with special needs and will track student's journeys.

Action: DJ to obtain data and share.

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1 There was no other business.